

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A germicidal UV lamp, comprising:

a. a housing, the housing having a UV light source therein and having at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light out of the housing ;

b. a safety switch on the housing for activating the light source, having a tool engaging portion adapted to engage an activation tool;

c. a means for preventing finger access to operate the safety switch; and,

d. an activation tool adapted to engage the tool engaging portion of the safety switch in order to selectively move the safety switch between an on and off position.

2. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 1, wherein the means for preventing finger access to the safety switch comprises a switch cover formed on the housing, the switch cover having an opening therein adapted to allow passage of the activation tool, the opening being sufficiently small to prevent a human finger from being inserted in the opening.

3. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 1, wherein the activation tool has a protrusion and the tool engaging portion is an opening adapted to receive the protrusion.

4. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 1, further comprising a light shield extending from the housing, the light shield surrounding the aperture.

5. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 4, wherein the light shield has side walls with an upper edge, the upper edge of the side walls defining the aperture.

6. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 4, wherein the light shield is formed from a tinted translucent plastic material which absorbs UV light.

7. A germicidal UV lamp and degermination chamber comprising:

a. a lamp housing, the housing having a UV light source therein and having at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light out of the housing

b. a degermination chamber for receiving objects to be sterilized by UV light from the aperture, a portion of the chamber being adapted to conform to the shape of the housing.

8. The germicidal UV lamp and chamber according to claim 7, wherein the chamber includes means for opening the chamber to place therein an object to be sterilized.

9. The germicidal UV lamp and chamber according to claim 7, wherein the chamber at least one wall with a slot therein to receive an object to be sterilized.

10. The germicidal UV lamp and chamber according to claim 7, wherein the degermination chamber is formed from material which blocks the transmission of UV light.

11. The germicidal UV lamp and chamber according to claim 7, wherein the degermination chamber is formed from a translucent material that absorbs UV light.

12. A germicidal UV lamp, comprising:

a. a housing, the housing having a UV light source therein and at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light;

b. a switch formed on the housing, the switch in electrical communication with a power source; and,

c. means selectively moveable in relation to the switch and the housing for preventing finger access to the switch when the means is moved to a first position and allowing finger access to the switch when the means is moved to a second position.

13. A germicidal UV lamp, comprising:

a. a housing having a UV light source therein and having at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light;

b. electrical terminals located on the housing and in electrical communication with a power source;

c. a cover over the terminals, the cover preventing finger access to the terminals, the cover having an opening therein adapted to allow passage of an activation tool; and

d. an activation tool, the activation tool formed from an electrically conductive material, the activation tool adapted to pass through the opening in the cover, the activation tool adapted to contact each terminal thereby completing a circuit and allowing current to flow through the terminals and the activation tool.

14. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 13, further comprising a light shield extending from the housing and surrounding the aperture.

15. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 13, further comprising a degermination chamber for receiving objects to be sterilized by the UV lamp, a portion of the chamber being adapted to conform to the shape of the housing.

16. A germicidal UV lamp, comprising:

a. a housing having a UV light source therein and at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light from the housing;

b. a switch on the housing, the switch in electrical communication with a power source;

c. a plate having a switch engaging portion, the switch engaging portion engaging the switch, and the plate having a tool engaging portion shaped to engage an activation tool;

d. a switch cover, the switch cover covering the switch and plate, the switch cover having a opening therein adapted to allow the passage of an activation tool; and,

e. an activation tool adapted to pass through the opening in the switch cover, the activation tool adapted to engage the tool engaging portion of the plate to selectively move the safety switch between an on and off position.

17. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 16, further comprising a back plate on the housing, the back plate surrounding the plate and the switch, the back plate forming a channel which controls the plate and the switch.

18. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 16, wherein the switch cover has an inner surface adjacent the plate and the switch, the switch cover having a channel formed on its inner surface which controls the movement of the plate and the switch.

19. A germicidal UV lamp, comprising:

a. a housing having a UV light source therein and at least one aperture allowing the passage of UV light;

b. a switch on the housing, the switch in electrical communication with a power source;

c. a light shield extending from the housing, the light shield having a window therein aligned with the aperture, the window permitting the transmission of UV light from the housing; and,

d. means for selectively blocking the transmission of UV light from the housing moveably attached to the light shield.

20. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 19, wherein the means for selectively blocking the transmission of UV light comprises:

- a. a guard plate, the guard plate moveably attached to the light shield or the housing,
- b. the guard plate having a first opening alignable with the window of the light shield to permit passage of UV light,
- c. the guard plate having a second opening, the second opening having a filter therein, the filter adapted to block the transmission of UV light while allowing passage of visible light, the second opening alignable with the window.

21. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 19, wherein the means for selectively blocking the transmission of UV light comprises a guard plate moveably mounted to the light shield, the guard plate having an opening therein, the opening having a filter therein, the filter adapted to block the transmission of UV light while allowing transmission of visible light, the opening alignable with the window.

22. The germicidal UV lamp according to claim 19, wherein the means for selectively blocking the transmission of UV light comprises a guard plate, the guard plate moveably attached to the light shield as a sliding shutter, the sliding shutter able to be selectively positioned so as to prevent or allow the transmission of UV light through the window, the sliding shutter having an opening therein, the opening having a filter therein, the filter adapted

to block the transmission of UV light while allowing transmission of visible light, the opening alignable with the window.